

Your dollar may not be worth all you think it is

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A federal judge recently ruled that, due to the U.S. Treasury Department's failure to design, produce and issue paper currency that is readily distinguishable to blind and visually impaired people, it violates federal law since paper money effectively precludes those groups from meaningful access to U.S. currency.

What also spoke volumes was the flimsy excuse that the Treasury Department used in its defense: that the ruling would create an undue financial burden for the government. This is pretty odd coming from a government that passes thousands of laws that create undue burdens for individuals and businesses. Not to mention that the Treasury Department through the Bureau of Engraving and Printing prints approximately 37 million currency notes each day with a face value of about \$700 million.

There have been times when Congress has considered adding braille markings to U.S. currency. They just haven't done it.

But the issue of using United States currency goes beyond whether or not it discriminates against the blind. The core issue behind using paper currency is simply this: Is it worth the paper it is printed on? A Federal Reserve Note regardless of denomination costs about 3 cents apiece to make. So in effect, when you hand a cashier a \$20 bill, they are accepting a three-cent note for \$20 worth of goods or services.

There was a time when a Federal Reserve Note was redeemable in silver at your local bank. This was the case as recently as the mid 1960s. But try redeeming a Federal Reserve Note for silver today, and the banker looks at you funny.

I can't help but to notice that in my short life, a gallon of gasoline has gone from about 75 cents to as much as \$3. The cost of housing has gone from somewhere in the neighborhood of \$25,000 to more than \$100,000. I remember my grandfather telling me he could buy a car for \$1,200 and gasoline for twenty-three cents a gallon.

Fortunately, there have been steps towards correcting this situation. There is an organization called the National Organization for the Repeal of the Federal Reserve and Internal Revenue Code or NORFED. Based in Evansville, Ind., NORFED issues a currency called the Liberty Dollar. It is a warehouse receipt backing up proportional amounts of gold and silver. The gold and silver is stored in a vault and undergoes monthly and yearly audits by a third-party accounting firm.

The Federal Reserve has said "so be it," and the U.S. Treasury legal staff declared that it is "not counterfeit" since its design, colors and sizes do not look anything like a Federal Reserve Note.

The warehouse receipts include many security features, such as holograms, micro printing, UV fluorescent ink trim, hot gold and silver foil stamping and an invisible synthetic DNA security thread. The silver has denominations of \$1, \$5, \$10 and \$20. There is also a \$1,000 gold denomination.

Best of all, as the U.S. dollar decreases in purchasing power, the value of gold and silver will go up. So whether you prefer bullion, old coins or Liberty Dollars, you should put at least some of your money into gold and silver.